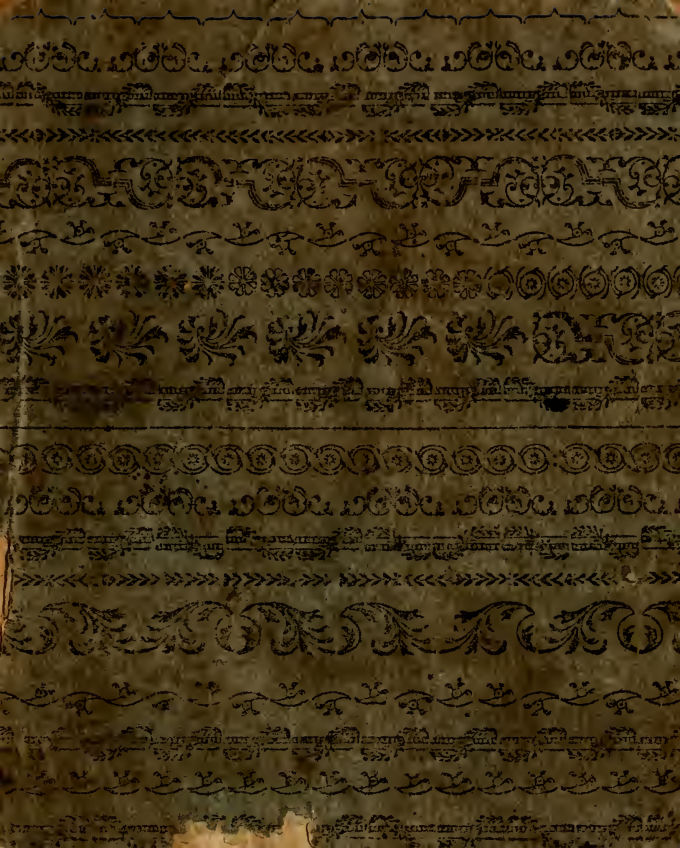
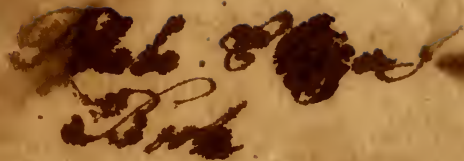
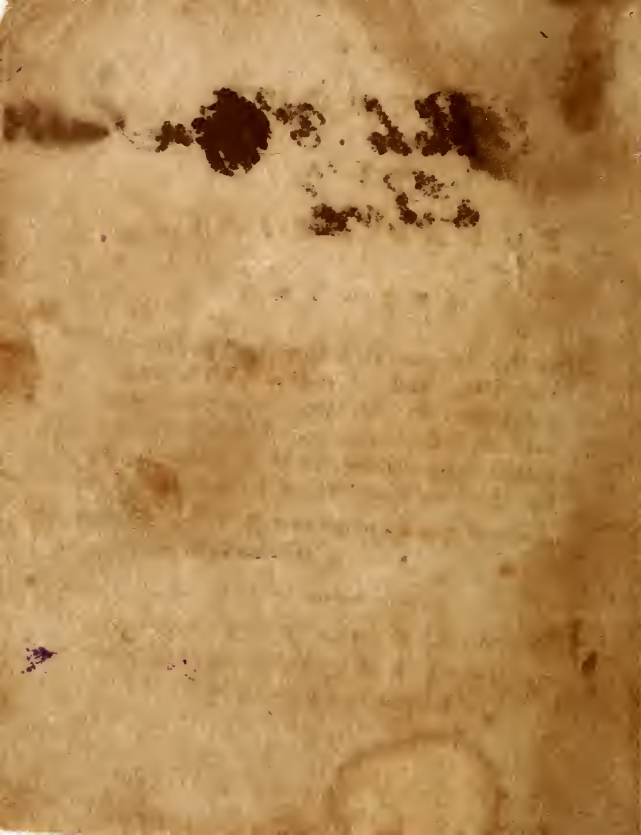






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A N
A C C O U N T
O F A
Y O U N G P R I N C E,
S H E W I N G

How he fet out to return to his father's kingdom, and of the mischiefs which beset him in the way; being an awful caution and warning to all young people, called to be children of God, and heirs of the glorious kingdom of Jesus Christ.

I will open my mouth in a parable.

Psaln lxxviii. 2.

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MANCHESTER PRINTED: STANFORD;
RE-PRINTED BY DANIEL
LAWRENCE.—1809.



A N A C C O U N T, &c.



IT happened on a certain time, that the Son of a very great and good king was born in a far country, at a great distance from his father's kingdom, where he was brought up amongst strangers, and knew nothing of his kingly birth, or of the greatness of his father's kingdom.

But the good king his father having notice of it, at a convenient season sent his servants to enquire out his son, and acquaint him who he was, and

bring him back along with them to his own kingdom. He sent also at the same time many *rich Presents*, saying, Give these unto my child, and tell him how glad I shall be to see him, and inform him also of my glory, and of the greatness and happiness in which I and my people live.

Now when the king's son saw his father's servants, and received the *rich Presents* which his father had sent him, and heard of his father's *Glory*, he was exceeding glad, especially to find that he was the son of so *great and good a King*: And for a time he could think of nothing else but of his *future* happiness, when he should arrive at his father's palace, and be received into the bosom of his father, and *sit down with*

him on his throne. And these thoughts made him very desirous to leave immediately the country where he had been brought up, and return with the servants to his father's kingdom.

So they all set out together, with great joy and gladness, and their journey was very prosperous and delightful for some time, for their way led through a most fruitful and pleasant country, the inhabitants whereof shewed them much kindness. But presently they came to a land through which they must needs pass, which was governed by an exceeding powerful and *very wicked King*. And it was the custom of this king and his people, that if any came into their territories, they at first shewed them all kind entertainment, and

appeared to be their best friends, and amused them with variety of fine sports and pastimes, together with music, dancing, and feasting, making them very merry; however, afterwards, they made them miserable slaves, and put some in dark dungeons, and forced others to hard labor, beating them most unmercifully, and never allowing them any food, but such *husks as the swine did eat.*

Now when the king's son came into this land, and saw the people eating and drinking, and making merry, his young heart *burned* within him to take his *pastime* with them; which his father's servants observing, said to him, let us hasten out of this country, for it is the country of a very wicked king,

who is thy father's enemy, and if we stay here, and *eat of his meat, and drink of his drink*, he will make us his prisoners, and we shall then never return and see our own country.

Nevertheless the young prince would not hearken to this advice of his father's servants, but following the counsel of his own deluded heart, he began to make merry with the people of that *wicked king*. So this people presently persuaded him, that his father's servants had not told him true concerning his father's kingdom, and that it would be much happier for him to spend his days in pastime with them, than to go after a kingdom which perhaps he might never find. Then he suffered himself to be persuaded by them; and

sent his father's servants away, telling them that he had no need of them, for that he did not believe what they had reported to him, and that he would stay in the land where he was.

So he forgot in a moment all his father's glory, and the *presents* which he had received from his father, and the joyful thoughts with which he had set out on his journey, and took up his abode with this wicked people.

Then were the servants very sorry, and went home and told unto the king all that had happened; and the king was greatly surprised and grieved at what they told him. And he said unto them, "surely ye did not tell my son
"my *glory*, nor give him the *rich pres-*

"ents which I sent him, nor inform
 "him how happy I should be to re-
 "ceive him, or else he would never
 "have hearkened to those wicked peo-
 "ple, and tarried behind in that miser-
 "able kingdom:" And they said, yea,
 but we did acquaint him with all things,
 and gave him likewise thy presents;
 and he also hearkened at that time unto
 us, and received thy presents gladly,
 and set out with us full of joy to think
 of returning to his father's kingdom.

Then said the king, "Did ye warn
 "him as ye ought to have done, con-
 "cerning that wicked king and his peo-
 "ple, and concerning the *snare*s which
 "would be laid for him in the land thro'
 "which he was to pass?" And they
 said, Yes, we did warn him faithfully,

but his own deluded heart would not be persuaded by us.

Now when the servants saw the good king's grief and disappointment at the loss of his son, they said unto him, Wilt thou that we go back with an army, and force him away from that *wicked king* and his people, who have taken him captive, and restore him thus to thee and to the kingdom?

And the good king answered, “ Not
 “ so, my servants; if it be his desire to
 “ remain amongst those miserable and
 “ wicked people, let him remain; we
 “ have done what was meet and right to
 “ do, in endeavoring, out of our ten-
 “ der love, to bring him back to be

“ happy in his own kingdom ; should
 “ we however *compel* him to come a-
 “ *gainst* his will, he would not be hap-
 “ py here if he did come : Nevertheless
 “ this I will do ; I will send a *faithful*
 “ *one* to be with him, and observe him
 “ *privately*, and *warn* him at conve-
 “ nient seasons : It may be, when he is
 “ brought into affliction, through cap-
 “ tivity and cruel bondage amongst that
 “ wicked people, he will then remem-
 “ ber all my kindness towards him, and
 “ what you have told him concerning
 “ the glory of my kingdom ; and if he
 “ shall then have a desire to return, he
 “ may return ; but if he shall have *no*
 “ desire to return, we must then sub-
 “ mit, and leave him to suffer the pun-
 “ ishment which his own folly and wick-
 “ edness have brought upon him : It is

“ enough for us, that we have most
 “ earnestly longed and labored, to the
 “ utmost of our power, to bring him
 “ back unto us, and make him a parta-
 “ ker of all our kingly greatness, glo-
 “ ry, and happiness.”

*The wicked shall not understand, but
 the wise shall understand.*

Dan. xii. 10.

C H A P. II.

NOW it came to pass, after a certain time, that the young prince, being forsaken of his Father's servants, and left alone amongst this wicked people, began to grow weary of that disorderly life into which they had led him: The evil pleasures which had so delighted him in the beginning, grew painful and grievous to him; his vain sports and pastimes could no more please him; moreover his health and strength were much impaired hereby; and what was worse than all, his con-

science began to reproach and torment him grievously, for having disbelieved his father's servants, and hearkened unto the persuasions of these wicked ones, who were his father's enemies.

He was brought also into great poverty and want, and the people about him gave him much trouble, forcing him to hard labor and drudgery for his subsistence. At times too they beat him with cruel stripes, and threatened to cast him into the *dungeon*, from whence he was never to be taken out: So he perceived that he was in a very evil case, and the thoughts thereof, together with his fears about his future lot, if he should be cast into the *dungeon*, made his life miserable past all description.

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Greater City

Then he said within himself, "What is me, that I should ever have been enticed by this wicked people, to take a part in their evil pastimes, and thereby forget my father's kingdom, and disbelieve my father's servants! Alas! if I had been wise, and obeyed my father's counsel, I might now have been happy in his kingdom, and sitting with him on his throne, and enjoying myself in plenty and peace among his people!—My conscience also would not then have accused and tormented me; nor should I have known sickness, distress and poverty; I should not have been *beaten with stripes*, nor would the *fears of a dungeon* have alarmed me! Oh that I might ever see again the face of my father's servants! for now surely I would hearken unto their words, and they

should be my guides to my father's kingdom ! But alas ! they are departed for ever from me, and have brought trouble moreover upon my father, by telling him of my folly, and I can never again hope to see their face, or the face of my father !”

Now it happened *one night*, whilst the young prince was thus bemoaning himself, and preparing to get rest from his troubles by sleep, that the *faithful one*, who had been sent by his father to *observe* him, came into the room where he lay. His countenance was *bright and shining as the sun*, and his raiment was *white as snow* ; he had a *crown* on his head, and a *rod* in his hand, and his feet were shod with *golden sandals* : And he came and stood near the place

where the young prince lay, and striking him with his *rod*, he said unto him with a voice of great majesty and sweetness, "Oh beloved son of my dear lord and master, arise, and come out from amongst this wicked people, for I am sent by thy father to deliver thee out of their hands."

Then the young prince suddenly starting up, was greatly terrified, and said, "who art thou? and what is thy name? and how camest thou in here to such a miserable one as I am at this time of the night?"

And the *faithful one* answering, said unto the prince, "I am one sent by thy father, to all who go astray as thou hast done, and am great in thy father's

presence, but I cannot as yet tell my *name*: Moreover I have been with thee for a long season, but thou hast not seen me, or known me, for I have been heretofore invisible; yet thou mightest have known me, if thou hadst well attended to what I have done for thee; for I have warned thee *privately* concerning the wicked people amongst whom thou art, and concerning the snares they have laid for thee; I have also put into thy heart good desires and thoughts concerning thy father's kingdom; and now, observing that thou hast listened to my *warnings*, and hast a *desire* to escape to thy father's kingdom, I have made myself visible and known to thee, and am come to help thee, and attend thee in making thy escape."

As he spake these words, tears of joy started into the eyes of the young prince, and a beam of peace and comfort was visible in his countenance; and he said, "How great is the goodness of my father, and how tender is his love! and how base and vile am I who could have forgotten and abused such love and goodness! And is it indeed true, that thou hast been with me of so long a season, and that I have been attended by such a *glorious one*, and have not known it, and that all my good thoughts and desires have come from thee!"

And the *faithful one* answered, "It is indeed true; for such at that time was the state of thine evil heart, that I could not make myself known unto thee; and if I had made myself known

unto thee, thou wouldest have done by me as thou hast done by the other servants of thy father, and sent me away, but now, since *affliction hath changed thine heart, and made thee wise*, I can venture to make myself known unto thee, and I am persuaded thou wilt hearken to my further counsel, and return with me to thy father."

"But how, said the prince, shall I appear before my father, who have so abused his goodness, and shewn such disregard to his message, and made myself so vile and filthy amongst these wicked people, who are my father's enemies? Is it possible that my father can forgive me, and look upon me with delight, who have thus defiled myself, and made light of his word?"

And the *faithful one* answered, "Alas! thou knowest little of thy father, and of the greatness of his mercy, and of the tenderness of his love towards thee: He is terrible only to the perverse and obstinate, but when his children are *humble and penitent*, and return to him with sincerity, he remembereth no more their transgressions:—And therefore it is written in the book of his law, "*There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance.*"

"But how, said the prince, can I appear before my father in these filthy and tattered garments?" "I have provided for that also, said the *faithful one*, for lo! I have brought with me garments

from thy father's palace, with which all his children are clothed, and which, by thy father's orders, I have reserved for thee till the time when thou shouldest have a desire to return." Then he presented to the prince a complete suit of rich apparel, calling each part thereof by its proper name in the *king's language*; and these are the names by which he called them; there was a *robe of righteousness, a garment of praise, a vesture of gold, raiment of needlework, and fine linen white and clean*; and he took off the prince's vile and tattered garments, and put on him the new cloathing of his father's house.

And he said unto the prince, "Arise and let us hasten to depart out of this wicked country, and from amongst this

wicked people, for thou mayest sleep no more in this place. Then they prepared to depart, and it was yet night, and by the time the sun was risen on the earth, they had reached the borders of the *wicked king's country*; and the young prince often looked behind him, for fear of being pursued and brought back again by the *wicked king*; for he said within himself, peradventure, when the *wicked king* hears that I am fled, he will send some of his people to stop me, and prevent my return to my father's kingdom.

And accordingly so it came to pass: For in the morning, when the *wicked people* found that the young prince had left them, they went and told it unto their king, and he sent a strong party

after him, to bring him back again, and they overtook the young prince and his guide, before they had reached the borders of their own kingdom.

And when the young prince saw them he was much afraid, and said unto himself, "Now will it be worse with me than if I had never attempted to come out from amongst this people, for surely now they will force me back again, and will use me more cruelly than heretofore:" And his heart fainted within him, and he cried out within himself for help.

But when the *faithful one*, his guide, saw that he so cried out and was afraid, he said unto him, "Be of good courage, my child, be not afraid; I will

fight for thee, and protect thee against this people ; only be sure that thou *puttest thy whole trust in me, and believest that I am able to help and deliver thee.*"

Then was the heart of the young prince more at peace within him, and he said unto his guide, "*I will believe in thee, and put my trust in thy power.*" And as he spake these words, the *wicked people* came upon him, and would have forced him away from the *faithful one*, and hurried him back into their own land : But the *faithful one* observing it, said unto the prince, "Take this *sword*, this *helmet*, this *breastplate* ; they are called, in the language of our country, *the sword of the spirit, the helmet of salvation, and the breastplate of righteousness* ; and fight that thou be not over-

come ; and I also will fight with thee."

So they fought, and soon prevailed over those wicked people, for the power of the *faithful one* was exceeding great, and none could stand against it ; the young prince was also very strong and courageous, seeing the mighty courage and strength of his companion.— Then having refreshed themselves after the labor of the combat, they proceeded on their journey.

And the way began now to be very delightful, sometimes leading through sweet and pleasant valleys, full of corn, and watered with rivers of water, where were to be seen shepherds with their flocks and herds ; and at other times leading over hills and lofty mountains,

from the tops of which they could discover at a distance the kingdom and the city of the *good king*. Nevertheless here and there they came to barren *wildernesses*, wherein were *beasts of prey* and *fiery flying serpents*, which caused much terror to the young prince : But his *faithful companion* supported and comforted him under all his fears, and by his sweet and instructive discourse, made the journey appear very short and pleasant, for he was always talking of the peace and happiness of the kingdom to which they were going, and of the wisdom of its laws, and of the king's greatness and goodness ; and moreover he kept his hand fast closed in the hand of the young prince.

Then on the *third day*, they entered

the borders of their own land, and it was presently noised abroad that the king's son was come, so that the king himself quickly heard thereof; and when he was assured that it was indeed his son, who had been lost for so long a time, he went out with all his great ones to meet him, and *when the son was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him*; and he said unto his servants, *Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry.* So the young prince was shewn into his father's palace, and he continued to live and reign with his father, and was happy all his days in his father's palace, and amongst his father's people.







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